40th Anniversary Souvenir Booklet

LOUGHLINSTOWN 1977 – 2017

Stories, Memories & Photographs

This book was funded by Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council

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INTRODUCTION

This souvenir booklet has been published as part of the Loughlinstown 40th Anniversary Celebration. It is based on the memories of the first local authority tenants to take up residence and ends with the last person to move into the newly built Maple Avenue. There are eighteen stories, old photographs and letters received from Dun Laoghaire Corporation.

The storytellers vary in many ways, but there is one underlying theme, the fact that they moved into an ongoing building site. No such thing as health and safety back then. They recall the JCBs, diggers, cement mixers, muck, dust, ongoing mopping of floors and the cows in nearby fields and roaming horses found in peoples gardens most mornings.

"JCBs were everywhere; the kids were always losing their shoes in the muck." Mary Mc Hugh

"When we took the sheet off the window we were surprised to see horses roaming around in our back garden." Brian O'Neill

"The highlight of the house was an indoor toilet, no more battling the elements." Teresa Devlin

"We were like children running from room to room with excitement." Pat O'Connor

"The walls were bare, but this offered us a 'blank canvas 'to express our individual tastes in the choice of décor." Brian Comiskey.

"I loved those days, no computers, no mobiles and we didn't watch that much TV." Mary Jackson

We hope this book will serve as a treasured keepsake for our families and for future generations and will be used as a valued resource for Loughlinstown in years to come.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The committee of the Loughlinstown 40th Anniversary Celebration would like to thank the following people and organisations who have made this event and the book possible:

- Anne Keegan who had the dream and insight to collect the stories and develop the book;
- Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council for their grant and for funding this book;
- Those who contributed their stories;
- Those who contributed old photographs and letters;
- Frances Browner for proofreading, editing and compiling the book and for her patience;
- The Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Parks Department for the cover map;
- The Community and Voluntary organisations, groups, local businesses and individuals who donated funding and resources that have made this event possible;
- The Anniversary Committee for their time, commitment and expertise on a voluntary basis to make this event and book happen - continuing the spirit of volunteering in Loughlinstown.

Gina Hogan (Chairperson)
On behalf of the 40th Anniversary Committee

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE LAND YOUR HOUSE WAS BUILT ON?

Loughlinstown got its name from the Irish, *Baile on Lochan*, town of the little pool, because it is said to have encircled a small lake where the Carrickmines River met the Bride's Glen stream. The first known settlers arrived around 3,000 BC. Evidence of their lifestyle remains in the many monuments that abound, including Dolmens, Stone Circles and Cromlechs, one of which stands in front of Cromlech Fields.

Loughlinstown House - Now the European Foundation

By 1541, the area had been colonized by the Goodmans of Loughlinstown and Rochestown. In 1666, King James donated the land to Sir William Domville, Attorney General of Ireland, who reared black cattle, sheep and horses. He built Loughlinstown House with a winding driveway from the entrance gates, the original pillars can be seen from the Dual Carriageway today.

Many generations of the Domville family lived on this land during the 17th & 18th centuries and then it was let out to various titled tenants. In 1940, Lady Alexander Domville took up residence there and reared cattle, prize poultry and pedigree peacocks. In 1963, she sold the house and land to Sir John Galvin, an American multi-millionaire of Irish descent, with the understanding that the river would be allowed flow through the Estates untouched.

In the mid 1970's, the area came into the possession of the Irish government's Office of Public Works who sold 150 acres to Dun Laoghaire Corporation for local authority housing and the rest was leased to the European Foundation.

The History of Community Development in Loughlinstown

For many years, our area was in Ballybrack Parish, creating problems when looking for grants for summer projects and other programmes. In July 1982, because of its increasing population, Loughlinstown was made a separate parish - St. Columbanus. Our own identity made a huge difference to grants, fundraising & community development.

Looking Back

In the summer of 1977, the first batch of Dun Laoghaire Local Authority houses was allocated in Achill Road, Glenavon Park, Arran Drive/Close/Avenue, Lambay Drive, Inagh Court and parts of Sheelin Grove. Families moved into a mist of bulldozers, JCBs, cement mixers, scaffolding and muck. Although it was great to have a new home, there were no play areas for children, no schools, no shopping-centre and only a limited bus service. School was a temporary pre-fab building on wasteland near Coolevin in Ballybrack. There was no community hall and little sense of community spirit. Tony Mulhall set up outdoor activities for the children in the Arran estates for a short while.

Summer Project: In 1978, Gerry Cahill of Glenavon Park undertook a door-to-door survey to organise a summer project for the children. People from every estate joined up and a Committee was formed, which met in a small office in Ennel Court provided by the Corporation. There was no electricity and meetings were held with a candle propped up on a table. In 1979, in conjunction with the Catholic Youth Council (CYC), the first summer project was held for 1,000 children. This played a vital role in community development. Other groups followed, like the Community Council who felt that resident associations should merge to create a stronger voice when negotiating with bodies like Dun Laoghaire Corporation or Dublin Bus. By 1983, almost nine hundred houses were completed. The Council also recognised the need for a Community Centre, but in an area of high unemployment, higher than the national average, it was impossible to start fundraising.

Gerry & his wife, Olive.

The Parish and Family Resource Centre

In 1983, the Catholic Social Service Conference (CSSC) realized the need for a community facility and presented us with a three-roomed pre-fab building on Sheelin Avenue. It was our first Community Centre funded by CSSC (now Crosscare) and was managed by an independent group of local residents. Soon, Playgroups, Youth Clubs, a Women's Resource Group, Scouts, Guides, Brigens, a Ladies Club, Drama Group, Pigeon Club, Adult Education and a Community Market were amongst the many activities running weekly in the centre.

As we still had no Church, Mass was held here for a short period. With the support of local volunteers and the CSSC, VEC and the Youth Service and later on a Community Employment Scheme, the Centre made a huge difference to community development. It served the area until 1994 when, through an act of vandalism, it was burned to the ground leaving the community devastated. However, the Parish Priest, Fr. Hasting, offered the use of a room in his house, as a temporary measure as did the local schools, FAS and the Health Centre.

Left: Goodbye to Sr. Catherine CYC.
Right: 1993 - Celebrating 10 years in the pre-fabs: L-R Jack Dunphy (CSSC), Bishop Dermot Murray, Fr. Hastings PP & members of the management committee.

Community Rooms

At the time, the Community Council had been working hard on fund-raising ideas for building our own permanent Community facility.

Fundraising bed push. Brian Godfrey pushes, as Miley Murphy plays the accordion!

Grants were applied for from the National Lottery and People in Need, amongst others. In 1994, Loughlinstown Community Council benefitted from its first major community grant from the newly formed Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council towards the building of this facility. A site was allocated and planning permission granted. Monarch Property provided the Community Council with an architect and an engineer, free of charge. Working with the newly appointed Area Community Officer, Tom Mowles, and through a FAS Youth Training Programme, the dream began and construction started.

A foreman was employed by the Community Council to implement the plans. Council members, Marie Mulhall RIP, Mary McHugh and Mags Kenny acted as caretakers for the site, as there wasn't any funding for a night watchman. Every day for nearly a year, at 4.30 p.m., they arrived with flasks, sandwiches and a torch and sat until nearly midnight in a cold, galvanized container, making sure no one touched the building materials. In November 1996, the dream became a reality and the doors of the Community Rooms were opened to the public.

Photo by Ann Wallace

Nowadays, the Rooms are a hive of activity. We have a thriving community with ongoing input from agencies and organisations. Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown County Council have provided a wide range of supports, facilities and grants - Community Employment Scheme, an Estate Management Programme, Parks and the RAPID programme, to name but a few.

Southside Partnership has also invested funding, support and advice over the years and are the sponsors for Holly House Community Development Project, including a local employment service, which is located in Holly Court.

Dun Laoghaire Educational and Training Board (formerly VEC) have been with us from 1980 and have sponsored two local women, Mags Kenny & Anne Keegan, to obtain a Maynooth Diploma in community development and leadership skills and continue to support local Adult Education programmes to the present day.

Crosscare Youth Service (formerly Dun Laoghaire Youth Service) have been with us since 1980 and have continued their ongoing support through the Garda Youth Diversion Project.

Southside Women's Action Network run a range of courses for women including a credited ETB Adult Education programme. They also provide a secretarial/photocopying and information service from their premises in Ennel Court.

Barnardo's and Springboard provide excellent family support programmes and services in Loughlinstown. With all these supports, we have a good, viable community, of which we are very appreciative.

And last, but not least, we want to say a big 'thank you' to the dedicated volunteers, both past and present who have made this community one to be proud of.

T**he first tenant to move in was . . .**

Ann Mooney – Achill Road

On a beautiful sunny Friday morning, the 3rd of June, forty years ago, the first ten houses of a new local authority housing estate in Loughlinstown were allocated.

As we were one of the ten lucky families, my very excited husband, Michael, and I made our way to the Town Hall in Dun Laoghaire to sign for our key at 10.30 a.m. Once it was in our hands, and a van loaded with some of our belongings, it was straight up to Number 10, Achill Road. The three-bedroom house was like heaven after living in a one-room flat in Clarinda Park, Dun Laoghaire, for seven years. We fell in love at first sight, even though the place was still a building site. A large fence was erected, as lorries and tractors were going up and down the unfinished road, but we didn't complain.

Because I was afraid of squatters taking over, I wanted to move quickly and in all the excitement I presumed the electricity was turned on, but it was not to be switched until the next day. My mother and father in-law were minding our kids, Sandra 7 and Graham 2 ½, while Michael and I made trips up and down transporting furniture. They gave the kids cornflakes with orange juice instead of milk for their breakfast and they thought this was great altogether. Dinner that evening was a take-away, naturally, as we couldn't use the cooker.

That night, we all snuggled into the one double bed, the only one set up. It was a little eerie, as we were the only family on the road. The night was pitch black, as there were no street lights, and it was very quiet, but we slept soundly. Over the next few days, more families moved in; some familiar faces, some new. I eventually had neighbours, who over the years have been the nicest one could have.

Our children thought it was like living in the country, with beautiful open spaces, green fields and a river flowing right across from our house. We even had a pond, known as "the pond field," and a forest.

Photo by Eoin Jennings

I walked my two dogs freely through fields and wild flowers, starting at the stream opposite my house and stopping at the first bridge (opposite Glencar Lawn) to look at the weir and the river flowing like a mini waterfall. The steps leading down to the stream were very ornamental and are still there today.

We continued on through the fields, heading for a pond with floating lilies and agley, surrounded by a circle of steps. Sadly, it has since been filled in for safety reasons. After the pond, we took a left, as Glenavon Park was a building site and blocked off and on we walked through an orchard, where FAS is now, past Loughlinstown House (the European Foundation), where Michael erected a TV aerial in the late 60's for Sir John Galvin. There was plenty of land around the house with stables and a hay barn, on which is now built the Leisure Centre and the Shopping Centre.

It was like taking part in one of my favourite Catherine Cookson novels. You could imagine what it was like living in those times when gentry had big houses and estates with garden parties on lawns and their guests riding horses through fields, fishing in rivers and duck shooting. We still have ducks, heron and egrets who visit the river every year. We did not worry about safety, not like to-day.

I love living here and am very involved in the community. I feel blessed to this day to be part of Loughlinstown.

Mags Kenny – Achill Road

It was the 9th of June 1977 and I was sitting in my flat in Clarinda Park in Dun Laoghaire with my two-year old twins, Janice and James, and another one on the way, when the post arrived with a letter from Dun Laoghaire Corporation telling me that we got a house on Achill Road in Ballybrack (as it was known then). I hadn't a clue where this was, but I was so excited, I didn't care. I couldn't wait for Liam to come home to tell him the good news. He was over the moon.

The next day, he went off to work and I went down to the Housing Department and signed for the house straight away. I couldn't wait to see what it was like, so with key in hand, I headed for the 45a bus. On I got and asked for Achill Road. The driver never heard of it, but said he passed a new building site on the way to Bray, so I took a chance. I arrived at the site and asked one of the workmen if this was Achill Road. He said it was and when I found the house, I noticed that some of the neighbours had already moved in and some were moving in that day. I turned the key, went in, and had a look around. I was very happy with the house and couldn't wait to move in. However, I did notice that the walls were plastered, but not painted. So Liam, with the help of Brian Godfrey, painted the hall, kitchen and sitting room the very next day.

As we had been living in a semi-furnished flat, all we had to take with us was a cooker, fridge and the beds. We needed more furniture, so off I went to the second-hand furniture shop in the lane at the back of Mc Donald's in Dun Laoghaire. I bought a table and chairs and a two seater suite for the sitting-room. Three days later we moved to our new home.

A ten-foot high fence had been put up outside houses 1-10, which were the only ones that had been allocated in June. There was an entrance at both ends of the fence to allow access to our homes and the view from our sitting-room window for weeks was this fence. The first day, the neighbours came to welcome us, but as it turned out I knew a few of them from flatland. We all got on great and every evening, sat on the wall drinking tea with the night watchman and had some great laughs.

We settled in well and were delighted when my parents said they would buy the carpet for the bedrooms and stairs. The only heating at the time was an open fire in the kitchen and in the sitting-room. We mostly used the fire in the kitchen, as the one in the sitting-room was giving us trouble with smoke. After months of waiting for someone to look at it, it was discovered that there was in fact a blockage in the upper part of the chimney. A large hole had to be made in the bedroom wall to locate where the problem was, which was ratified, but we were waiting for nearly six months for someone to come back and seal up the hole and the bedroom was freezing cold.

The first celebration on our road was the wedding of Patricia O' Reilly from number 1 in October 1977. She looked beautiful and I was amazed when I saw her father coming out and throwing coins on the ground for the neighbours and children to collect. I had never seen this done before, as I am not from Dublin originally and I thought at the time it was a lovely gesture.

The next event was the birth of a baby boy in early October to the Morrison family across the road from me. He was the first child born on Achill Road and the second child to be born in Loughlinstown. Two weeks later, I gave birth to my daughter, Denise, the first girl to be born here. She will celebrate her 40th birthday on October 22nd this year.

As the months rolled by, more and more houses appeared and the estate was almost finished by 1978, except for the Cromlech Fields. That land remained untouched for a number of years and during the summer, a fun fair and carnival would arrive and stay for two weeks. It was a great novelty and fun for all.

The following year, Gerry Cahill knocked on my door looking for help to set up a Summer Project. I agreed, even though I hadn't a clue what it was, but I soon learned. Little did I know that I would be a co-ordinator for six years running. That first summer project catered for hundreds of children and was run from one room beside the archway in Ennel Court.

I remember our first local priest, Fr. Mitchell, being asked to attend one of our planning meetings, which was around Easter time. We wanted him to say Mass at the end of the project. After the arrangements were finalised, he suddenly said to the packed room, "Ah, sure while I'm here, I might as well hear Confessions!" We told him we only had the use of the one room, the one we were in. He then asked what was behind the door over in the corner. We told him it was just a toilet. He smiled and said, "Ah, sure that's grand." So, in we went one-by-one, with him sitting on the toilet seat hearing our Confessions, as we sat on a chair beside him. We still laugh when we think of that today.

Anne Keegan & Mags Kenny
Summer Project Mass, 1979

It was after that first summer project that a range of groups were formed including a Women's Resource group, which I joined. We met in members' houses for months while taking part in a community development training course run by the Catholic Youth Council (CYC).

The group later became involved in all kinds of community activities such as Adult Education, Youth groups, and a local Information Centre, which was run for a while on a Saturday morning in the old Health Centre on Wyattville Road, Ballybrack. These women are still active in the community today. So much has happened since those early days and all to the good.

We can be proud of what we have achieved over the last forty years. So much so, I could write a whole book about Loughlinstown but I have to stop somewhere.

Patricia Howe (O'Reilly) - Achill Road

I remember my mother Sadie being excited at the thought of moving house. We were in a two-bedroomed on Lower Georges Street, Dun Laoghaire. Talk about location, location, location. However, the downside was there was seven children and two parents living in this house and an outside toilet, no bathroom and this was 1977. We were beside schools, St. Michael's Hospital, (regular patients to the A&E) the Church, the Park and the shops. My poor Dad, Joe, never missed an opportunity to tell us what we were leaving behind. How irregular the 45A was; how much it would cost and as for immersion heaters, well basically he felt we would be on the bread line if we moved. Not a good idea at all, he said.

However, Sadie was far more progressive and both she and Joe eventually found themselves in the Town Hall on the 17th of June, taking possession of the key to Number 1, Achill Road, Loughlinstown. The excitement was great. I, however, was not really that happy. You see, I would only live there for three months, as I would be getting married and moving onto Bray. Being so organised, I had the wedding invites with the RSVP for Dun Laoghaire, so that would have to be changed. Third world problems when you are twenty years of age and self–absorbed in your own little world.

My mother, however, was in her element. Family and friends were roped in for the big move. Wallpaper was picked and new curtains and carpets chosen. There was a frenzy of activity going on in No 1, with rooms being "bagged" and the excitement of a bathroom and a separate toilet. We thought we were very posh altogether, having gone from outdoor loo to this. Sure we thought it was great.

A younger member of the family expressed shock on opening the shed door. He was heard saying, "Oh My God, there is no toilet in it!" Horror of Horror. And, of course, the inevitable question, why was there only one window on the front upstairs? Looks funny, looks mad, but then go around to the side and we had a side window.

Eventually, we were in and life took on a different meaning. Buses had to be timed for schools, as at this stage the O'Reillys were still commuting to the old schools in Dun Laoghaire. Shopping had to be hauled home, and while it was lovely to have open fields in the back, there were times when you asked yourself, did we do the right thing.

In the middle of the big move, there was a knock on the door one day, and this lovely excitable woman, asked was this Achill Road, as she had got the key to No 2. We said it was and in she came and that was our lovely neighbour Phyllis, and all her gang, and friendships were made that still continue to this day.

We had more great excitement a couple of months later, as we were joined by another family. The other O'Reillys were moving up from Dun Laoghaire and they took up residence at 109, Achill Road. We were so delighted. Imagine your cousins living up the road from you? All in new houses with gardens? Sadie and Maisie, two sisters, married to two cousins, sharing and caring with all the joys of rearing a young family, each looking out for each other. Happy days.

Days rolled into months and months rolled into years and the landscape was changing. More houses were built, as well as new schools and eventually, the Church came along, which gathered the now spreading housing estates together to form a living viable community.

Rose of Loughlinstown, Anne, O'Reilly & her mother, Sadie

Great work was carried out by the residents in forming Summer Projects and football clubs, in order to build a happy place for people to live and enjoy.

My sister, Anne, was even crowned Rose of Loughlinstown, many many years ago!

In October 1977, I got married and my proud father scattered coins to the neighbours, as we left the house for the Church. For years after, I came back to Achill Road every day, as I was so lonely out in Bray with two small kids and I also spent many weekends in the new house. They couldn't get rid of me.

Of course, life has its ups and downs, and our poor Dad, Joe, did not get long to enjoy his new house. He passed away after a short illness and only got to spend about eighteen months there. We like to think he was happy with the move and the time he did spend in Loughlinstown. Then we had two big floods. The river in front flooding from the heavy rainfalls, which were just so awful, the poor house was wrecked, but the neighbours came out to help with all the sweeping and tidying up. Thank you for that.

We are so lucky that forty years later, we still have our lovely mother, who was brave enough to make the first step and create a beautiful warm and loving home that we could share with our friends. She also created a lovely garden that she still loves to tend to.

Home is where your mother is. You can curl up on the couch and pretend you're small again and be looked after. We know how much she loves Achill Road and her neighbours and friends. Some have moved on, and are still missed and loved. Some are still there, and loved, and without them, it would be very lonely.

It's hard to believe that forty years have passed. A whole mixture of emotions, loss and growth have gone with them, but time moves on. I am sure the cycle will continue and people will love and respect the beautiful parks and amenities that have sprung up over the years, which were created with hard work, blood, sweat and tears, and involvement with Councillors to create a happy environment for us to live in.

DÁRDAS DÚN LAOGHAIRE
CORPORATION OF DUN LAOGHAIRE
Halla an Baile, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Áth Cliath.
TOWN HALL, DUN LAOGHAIRE, Co. DUBLIN.
Eadan—Dún Laoghaire: 808961/8
TELEPHONE—DUN LAOGHAIRE:
D. O'Hogan, Town Clerk.

Dún Laoghaire

Brian and Mary Comiskey
47 Glenavon Park
Loughlinstown

8/7/77.

Loughlinstown housing lands - Section K1
Contractor: Thomas Mc Inerney & Co.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Comiskey

You are among the first residents to move into this scheme and I wish to welcome you to your new house where I sincerely hope you will spend many happy years. The scheme will form part of the community of housing schemes on Loughlinstown lands, the population of which is expected to reach 5,000.

As you probally know the Corporation bought these lands from Sir John Galvin and is already building 562 houses there. The residence, Loughlinstown House, and a curtilage of 13 acres was purchased by the State for use by the E.E.C. Foundation for the Improvement of Living Standards and Working Conditions.

There is an extensive woodland area and open space, a pond, a weir and a stream which crosses these lands; in addition there is the former riding arena which will be used as an indoor recreation centre. Surrounding it, in the walled gardens, there is room for some outdoor playing facilities. Sites have been reserved to suit community needs such as church, schools, health centre, shops etc.

One day, Loughlinstown will be a parish of its own, with its own schools and a church. At present the catholic parish administrator is Fr. Mitchell (phone 801505). From September he will live in No. 8 Wyattville Road. A site has been allocated for a primary school, which should be built within the next two years; and until then the school going children will attend St. Columcilles School, Wyattville Road.

As much as possible of the natural beauty of Loughlinstown lands is being preserved. The weir will be kept much as it is today, but there will be a path on one side of it. The pond may possibly be made into a boating pool to form the centre piece of the village.

However, as you move in you may well be annoyed by the dust and noise and only see the disadvantages and dangers of the trees, the pond and the stream. The dust and noise resulting from building will end when your scheme is completed. Your children will probably be fascinated by the water courses. A young child can drown in inches of water; so it is important that they are kept away from the stream and pond unless you are with them. The Corporation employs a caretaker who at present lives in a prefabricated house overlooking the pond. It is hoped that the residents will co-operate with him in the matter of the safety of the children.

Trees can make the difference between ugliness and beauty. They are a sanctuary for birds and many forms of wildlife. The Irish people used to regard trees as sacred for they are essential to our lives, yet some parents stand and watch their children pull down branches for their November bonfire and wantonly destroy young trees! Children must be taught to respect and appreciate the trees otherwise the trees will be destroyed and the natural beauty of the area lost. Your co-operation in preserving the trees is essential. Many of the trees are fine examples of their kind and a considerable amount of money has been spent in preserving them. The Corporation is concerned that this money be not wasted.

Mary and I, with our two young sons, shared a house with her parents and her three younger sisters in Sallynoggin. Although it was overcrowded, we all got on very well. However, when we got the news that we had been allocated a new house in Loughlinstown, we were 'over the moon' as I'm sure were her parents.

We got one of the first twenty houses allocated in Glenavon Park. We collected the keys on the 7th July 1977 and moved in two days later. We were delighted to get a three-bedroom house. Other than a sink unit in the kitchen and a bath and wash-hand basin in the bathroom, the house had no other appliances, but that was the norm. The walls were bare plaster, but this offered us a 'blank canvass' to express our individual tastes in the choice of décor. We had bought a very expensive gas cooker, only to discover that everything was electric. Gas wasn't installed for years later. Still, we were delighted with our new home and looked forward to the future.

However, three weeks after moving in, we had a major disaster. The whole sewer system, serving house numbers 35 to 54, was found to be blocked, causing raw sewage to overflow into the rear gardens. Unfortunately, this happened on the Saturday evening of the August bank holiday, when builders took their two weeks annual holidays. There was no plumber available or any other assistance, so it fell onto certain residents, including myself, who were experienced in construction methods, to unblock the sewers.

We were facilitated by the night watchman, who gave us access to sewer rods and, more importantly, drawings of the sewer system and we were able to clear the blockage, but only on a temporary basis. Concrete was later discovered in the pipes, which caused the blockage. We worked from eight o'clock that night until half one in the morning. At ten o'clock the following morning, Sunday, a labourer employed by the builder arrived to clear the sewer, but without success.

One of the residents contacted the Corporation and requested a gully-sucker, but when it arrived the crew refused to carry out any remedial work, as it was the responsibility of the builder until the estate was 'handed over' to Dun Laoghaire Corporation. On further examination of the site plans by one of the residents, it was discovered that no less than three manhole covers, which were on the map, were not visible. When later located, it was discovered they had been covered over with plywood and then topped with soil to a depth of up to 1,000mm. (About three feet.) These twenty houses had been handed over to the tenants without full prior inspection.

By that stage, we had set up the first Tenants Association with myself as the chairperson. After much to-ing and fro-ing in the following months with the Borough Architects Office and the Clerk of Works, the problems were eventually rectified. The Tenants Association continued to work on behalf of the residents of Glenavon Park and brought all concerns and issues to the attention of Dun Laoghaire Corporation. For example, street lighting, public paths, open spaces, safety around the stream and pond, and surface water lodging in front and back gardens.

Piped television was much in demand, as we only had RTE1 and RTE2 at the time. Tommy Heffernan of Glenavon Park (recently deceased) was instrumental in having this service installed, much to the delight of the residents.

Although the first few years were full of hard and tiring work, they were also satisfying because of the calibre of the many people who, like us, came to make their homes in Loughlinstown. Some stayed, others moved on to pastures new and sadly, some died here. I reflect on all those individuals with fondness and am happy to have known them.

We have spent many happy and some sad years here and I'm proud to say I live in Glenavon Park, Loughlinstown.

Not Killiney!

James Byrne - Sheelin Grove

Ann and I came to Loughlinstown in July 1977. We were delighted to be given a three-bedroom house, as we had been living in one room on Prince Edward Terrace in Blackrock. The day we got the keys, we moved in immediately, to a building site with only three blocks of houses completed in Sheelin Grove and no proper entry roads.

Taken by a young Dave Keeggn

We were the first to arrive and were on our own for three nights. From the front of our house, as all you could see were acres of fields with horses and cows. From upstairs, you could see Loughlinstown Hospital in the distance. Closer, was a small bridge and a stream flowing through the estate. To the right, horses were drinking from a large pond in a field close to where Glenavon Park is now. There was also a real forest beside us with lots of trees. Sadly, most of them have disappeared.

There was no access or short cuts to other areas from our estate at the time, so for me to get to work in Dublin every day, the only bus available was a Number 45 from the Loughlinstown/Bray Road. Every morning, I came out of the house and onto the main Shanganagh Road, walked up to the Ballybrack crossroads, took a left and walked down to the end of Wyattville Road, now known as the duel carriageway and it was the same coming home in the evening. That was no joke in winter.

When walking up to the Ballybrack crossroads, I could see over a wall into another field where Ridge Hill apartments are now. The owner kept goats and all the kids loved looking at them. There was a camping site opposite the end of Achill Road, full of tourists' tents and caravans, especially in the summer. It was like living in the country. Most of us had come from Dun Laoghaire and Blackrock, where very few had gardens. When I look around me now, the place is completely different from when we arrived. Hard to believe it was forty years ago.

BÁRDAS DÚN LAOGHAIRE
CORPORATION OF DUN LAOGHAIRE
Halla an Baile, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Áth Cliath.
TOWN HALL, DUN LAOGHAIRE, CO. DUBLIN.
Guthán—Dún Laoghaire: 806961-9
TELEPHONE-DUN LAOGHAIRE
D. ÓhÓgáin, Cléireach an Bhaile
D. O'Hogan, Town Clerk.

Brian and Bernadette O'Neill
30 Convent Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin.

I dTreoghaint Uimh Cheapaire so:
IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

1977.

Low-Rise Mortgage Scheme

A Chairde,

Enclosed is notification of provisional allocation to you of a new dwelling in Loughlinstown. Your attention is directed to the provisions of a low-rise mortgage scheme which affords tenants the opportunity to commence purchasing the house from the outset.

Under the scheme a loan of up to the full cost of providing the house may be advanced for the purchase of that house by the Corporation. The loan would be for a maximum of 30 years at the current local loans fund interest rate (at present 12½).

A person allocated a new Corporation house may agree to purchase under this scheme within three months of being allocated the dwelling.

If you are interested in purchasing your dwelling, a copy of the scheme can be had on application to this office.

Mise, le meas,

F.L. Gaffney

F.L. Gaffney,
Section Officer,
Housing Administration.

Brian O'Neill - Arran Drive

It was the 22nd of July 1977 when we got the letter telling us we had been allocated a house in Loughlinstown. It was like winning the Lotto or the Sweepstakes, as it was known then.

We had two children, a boy and a girl and were living with my mother-in-law on Convent Road, Dun Laoghaire. The first thing we did was to visit the site to see our new home. As I had a car, it was an easy drive to Loughlinstown. We were delighted with the house even though the estate was still in the process of construction. The site compound and the night watchman's hut was directly across from our house. We soon got to know him, Billy was his name, and he lived close by in Dale View.

We moved in shortly after that visit and were so excited at having our own home, at last. We had no curtains to put on the windows for the first few days so we put bed sheets up for privacy. I remember the first morning being awakened by a noise in the back garden. When we took the sheet off the window, we were surprised to see horses roaming around in all the back gardens, as there were no walls dividing the houses yet. This was a common occurrence, as there were acres of fields close by, before Cromlech Fields was built. The horses seemed to make their way down to the houses in the early hours of most mornings.

Although we were delighted with our big front and back gardens, there was a lot of work to be done. The builders seemed to have buried all their rubble in the gardens and covered it over with soil. When we went to dig, we found rocks, pieces of hard pebble dashing, lumps of hard cement and one of my neighbours found a wheel barrow.

As more people moved in, we soon got to known our neighbours. My wife knew most of them, as she came from Glasthule and Dun Laoghaire. I didn't, as I was from Cabra West, so Loughlinstown was a huge change for me. But, that soon passed, as I became involved in community activities, especially summer projects for kids.

I got to know lots of lovely people through volunteering over the years and there was ample amount of them back then.

As I was one of the few people in the area who had a car, I made many a trip for neighbours over the years to Loughlinstown Hospital and Harcourt Street Hospital and on occasion also to the Vets.

We will be forty years living here this year and they have been happy ones. Our neighbours are great and we have all supported each other through good and bad times over the years.

When I look around our community now and see the huge progress made over the years with all its facilities for both young and old, it's a place to be proud of. We have a clean area with lots of green spaces and nice walks along the river. To have the opportunity to write the memories in our own book is testament to what we have today.

Here's to the next forty years.

Summer Project visit to St. Audoen's Medieval Church, Dublin

Teresa Byrne - Arran Drive

The letter arrived, the one we had been waiting six years for. With trembling hands, I opened the envelope. Great news! We had been allocated a three-bedroom house in Loughlinstown. We were living in a bedsit, sharing a bathroom, in a house on Prince Edward Terrace, Blackrock. We had three children at the time and would have been happy with anything, but to be given three bedrooms was a dream come true.

We were so excited, we couldn't wait to see our new house, so we took ourselves and the kids on a bus to Dun Laoghaire, then a 58 to Ballybrack. We got off at St. Mathias Church and looked down at the sea of houses. Not knowing the area, we were lost until a passer-by directed us towards Shanganagh Road. We eventually found Arran Drive and the first sighting of our house took our breath away. It looked so big and beautiful and we had a large front and back garden with a side entrance ***and*** our own hall door. The houses were separated by rows of wire. Some of the neighbours had already moved in and are still there forty years on.

The day we moved in was a glorious day in the month of August 1977, the start of a whole new life for us all. We moved what furniture we had at the time and my sister-in-law gave us a cooker. The front and back gardens were going to need a lot of work, as there was rubble left by the builders, but that didn't bother us at all. We were so glad to have our own home.

Taken by a young Dave Keegan

More houses were being built around us and right outside was the night watchman's hut. Beyond that, we could see acres of fields where Cromlech Fields was later built. Horses would wander over and make their way down to the houses. One morning, my husband, on his way to work was coming around the side of the house with his bike and couldn't believe his eyes when faced with a horse who had made his way into our side entrance. He had a job trying to shoo him out.

After moving in, our first priority was to get the children into school. There were none in the area at the time, but we were given some prefabs over in Coolevin in Ballybrack. There was no transport so every day, all the parents walked over to the school. It was a great way to get to know your neighbours. Later on, we used a private bus that collected and returned the children.

There was no money to employ cleaners for the prefabs so myself and a neighbour volunteered to clean the classrooms every Friday after school, with our kids in tow, of course. Fr. Frank Mitchell, our Parish Priest, was very grateful as was Mr. O'Driscoll, the School Principal at the time. Though money was short, Fr. Mitchell would drop in every Friday with bags of sweets for our kids.

We eventually got our own junior school in 1981 and our Church in June 1988. There were a lot of young families living in Loughlinstown by then and still more houses being built. We had our first Summer Project in 1979, which catered for hundreds of children and was run from a small room in Ennel Court. It wasn't long after that first project that residents came together to do something for the growing population. Soon, we had youth clubs, football clubs and summer projects, all up and running.

Gerry's had enough!

After many years of fundraising, we now have a beautiful Community Centre, which is used by everyone in the area. The time has flown so quickly and I can't believe it is forty years since we moved here. Our young children are now married with children of their own, but they still talk about the summer projects and the camping weekends with the youth club.

Sadly, some of the youth leaders have passed on to their just rewards, but will always be remembered by the children of Loughlinstown.

Anne Keegan - Glenavon Park

I got the news about my new house the day Elvis died. It was the 16th of August, 1977. I had heard on the nine o'clock news that he been found dead and although I wasn't a great fan, I still felt sad. An hour later, though, I was jumping around with excitement when the postman arrived with a letter from Dun Laoghaire Corporation with the news of a new house. They gave the address and said it would be ready by mid-September.

I couldn't wait to see where it was and got a 45a bus out to Loughlinstown the following Saturday afternoon. After roaming around and getting lost in what was still a building site, I eventually found it. The first thing I noticed was the splashes of muck on the hall door, but I was thrilled with the lovely colour they had chosen for all the hall doors, *Salmon*. We peeped in through the sitting-room window and could see buckets and ladders and noticed the walls had just been plastered. There wasn't much else to see, as building was still going on all around.

Soon, it was time to move and all our belongings were piled onto my cousin's coal truck (which he had cleaned first of course). My brother followed on his motor bike to help with the unloading and to connect the cooker. Strangely enough, the house inside felt relatively small, as we had come from a large hall flat in a Georgian house in Vesey Place on York Road, which had two huge rooms, a large kitchen and bathroom and a back garden.

There was a lot to be done in our new house, unlike nowadays when all you have to do is move in. The inside doors were painted, the walls were plastered but not painted, tenants had to do their own. I didn't know at the time that you should always paint the walls to seal them before you papered. Of course, I couldn't wait to cover the pinkish plastered look in the sitting room. I suffered years later when I tried to remove the wallpaper and nearly took the whole wall down.

The staircase in our new home was a great novelty for my two sons, as they were not used to one, having lived in a hall flat. They had a great time running up the stairs and sliding down the banisters. The floors upstairs had chipboard sheeting in the bedrooms and there was grey lino in the bathroom, which was okay. Downstairs, we had dark brown lino tiles in the hall and kitchen, which I was forever mopping because of the dust and muck coming in constantly from the ongoing building work outside. There was no central heating or double glazing back then so we relied on the open fires in the sitting room and kitchen to heat the water and the house. The kitchen fire was the one mostly used during the day and come the evening, I would take a shovel full of burning coals and transfer them to the sitting-room for instant heat every day. There was nothing in the kitchen only a sink unit and for a while, my kitchen table and four chairs looked lost, until I could afford some presses.

Photo by Anne Keegan

We soon got to know our neighbours and realised we all had the same moving-in problems. We were surrounded by bulldozers, JCBs, cement mixers etc. There was lots of horses roaming around from the upper fields and one morning, I came downstairs to see two of them outside my window and I grabbed my camera! There was nowhere safe for kids to play. There was no supermarket, no school, no community centre and no proper bus service. Hundreds of houses were being built in the area without any infrastructure.

However, before long the community began to get together, mainly through our first big Summer Project, which included children from all the new estates.

This happened through the work of a man called Gerry Cahill (RIP) from Glenavon Park. In late 1978, with now hundreds of new residents, he undertook a door-to-door survey looking for volunteers and interested parties to bring it all together. There was great interest. Lots of parents were willing to help out and in the summer of 1979, we had a very successful project, the first of many, catering for nearly one thousand children and ending with a talent show each year in the Workmans' Club in Ballybrack.

People got to know each other after that first Summer Project. Various groups were formed and began to look at the needs of the community. It was the start of community development and there was no shortage of volunteers back then.

Looking back, they were the people who made Loughlinstown what it is today and I am proud to say I am one of them.

Happy Anniversary.

Bert's Chipper Van and Breda & Carol's shop van at the bottom of Laurel Avenue

Both photographs were taken by a young Dave Keegan.

Mary Flanagan – Arran Drive

Paddy and I moved in to our new home in August 1977 with our three children and our cat. We were living in a two-roomed flat in Clarinda Park in Dun Laoghaire at the time and had been on the housing waiting list for fifteen years.

Our first impression was of all the building that was still going on around us. There were rocks and rubble in our front and back gardens. My father had to come all the way from Sallins in County Kildare to lay a path from my back door to the end of the garden to allow me to hang washing on a line, which he also put up. I had a twin-tub washing machine, which was all the fashion at the time and by God there was plenty of washing to be done, as the dust and muck was everywhere.

We were glad to get a house, but there was a lot to be done. The kitchen had nothing in it only a single sink unit. There was no wall or floor presses. The walls themselves were plastered, but not sealed with paint. Our heating came from an open fire in both the sitting-room and the kitchen, which also had a back boiler to heat our water. Our neighbours were great and we always helped each other if we were stuck or needed anything.

Very soon after moving in, we had constant knocks on the door from coalmen selling coal, logs and turf. We also had a vegetable man and a bread man. This was great, as there were no supermarkets in the area at the time and you still needed to travel to Dun Laoghaire to do the main shop and other things.

Children came shopping with us and to the doctors and hairdressers. Lots of families would be seen at the bus stop waiting for ages for a bus, hoping it wouldn't be packed. How things have changed in forty years. One place that was always packed was the Ramblers Rest pub. It was the most popular place to socialise at the time with at least five people deep at the bar. We were always very happy in Loughlinstown and I still am.

Ellen and Mary Jackson - Arran Drive

Ellen: My husband, Patrick, and I lived in a flat in the old Shangri-la Hotel in Dalkey for eleven years. The hotel backed onto the sea so there was nowhere for our four children to play. Every day, I had to bring them out somewhere, mostly to the People's Park in Dun Laoghaire or Sandycove in the summer. Housework was done at night when the children were in bed. So, on the 5th August 1977, we were delighted when we got word of a brand new house in Loughlinstown.

Ellen's daughter, Mary, takes up the story:

Mary: I was ten years old when we moved to 30 Arran Drive, and I was really excited about the new change. We got the train from Dalkey and it was a really long walk to our new home. When we got there, there were no roads or paths and there was muck everywhere.

The day we moved in, our neighbours Christopher, Linda and Susan Byrne were sitting on their wall watching us. As soon as we got through the front door, we ran up the stairs and my sister Anne and I got the box room. Our two brothers were going mad. Everywhere we looked there were fields, even going up as far as Ballybrack Village.

We went to school in a prefab over in Coolevin and were picked up every morning in Hughie McCann's bus. I remember Ms. O'Byrne, a lovely teacher, and Mr. O'Driscoll, the Principal. Mass was held in the school until the Church was built. I also remember going over to Inagh Stores, to the shop van in Glenavon, and to Murphy's and Ryan's in the Village, where the Credit Union is now.

There were lots of fields opposite our house, with piebald horses, and once we came across a dolmen. Owlyn and Erica Barry lived next door. I used to play with Owlyn who, I remember, had a lovely turquoise pram. Then her sister Roslyn was born and after that came Joy. I used to mind them, wheeling them up and down the road in the pram. I also babysat for John and Leslie Maher, the McCarthys and the Dunnes, who lived right beside me.

I loved those days – no computers, no mobiles and we didn't watch that much TV, except on a Saturday morning. We just played games on the road and sat on the walls outside our houses.

I was only in the new school for a short while and then I went to the Holy Child in Sallynoggin. I started my first job in Killiney Court, when I was still living on Arran Drive, and didn't leave that house until 1988 on the day I got married.

We had great neighbours and Mam and Dad still do to this day. Nothing has changed.

Local schoolchildren learning about the Dolmen

Kay Morrison - Achill Road (recently moved to Dun Laoghaire)

John and I were renting a small corporation house on Dominic Street in Dun Laoghaire. We had three children at the time and another one due in two weeks, when we heard we were successful in getting a three-bedroom house on Achill Road in Loughlinstown. I had never had a house with a bathroom before, and I relished the idea.

On the 20th of September, 1977, we packed up our belongings and with the help with of my friend, Jenny, and her husband, off we went to our new home. We were very excited to be moving.

I thought the house was huge, as I was only used to a small house with a passageway and only a sink to wash the children. Our new home had a huge front and back garden, which we were not used to at all. There was still a lot of building going on around us and every time you went out, you got covered in muck.

On the 4th of October, just two weeks after moving in, I went into labour, so John rang for an ambulance from a phone box at the top of the road. They seemed to take ages and John stood at our hall door panicking, wondering what was keeping them. Eventually, he got on his Honda 50 and off he went to look for the ambulance. It was very dark outside, as streets lights were not installed yet, nor was there a clear and proper entrance into Achill Road from the main road. The ambulance crew had got lost. John found them at last and guided them back. I was then brought to Holles Street Hospital where I gave birth to a beautiful little boy, Anthony, who will celebrate his 40th birthday this year.

We had a mobile shop up at the top of the road, which we relied on for milk and bread, and Thank God we had a phone box, as there were no landlines or mobile phones at that time. We had no school in the area yet, so we had to bring our children over to Coolevin in Ballybrack to temporary classrooms until the building of Archbishop McQuaid's School was completed, just behind our house.

We had more people than enough knocking on our doors trying to sell us things. As it was a new estate, people knew that the home owners would be in the market for certain items. There was a Provident van outside selling everything from clothes to household items. On Fridays, we had the milkman, vegetable man, coal man and the rent man all calling for bills and rent owed. We even had the site watchman calling in for tea occasionally.

A couple of weeks after moving in, while hanging out nappies on the line, I heard a voice in the garden two doors up from me. "Is that you Kathleen Gately? Remember me from the farm?" It was a friend of mine, Marian Byrne, whom I had grown up with in Monkstown Farm, and we have always been great neighbours and are still friends to this day.

Ah, happy days.

Anthony's christening with our first Parish Priest, Fr. Frank Mitchell

Tony Mulhall - Arran Avenue

Marion and I moved to Arran Avenue on the 10th of October 1977, with our two children aged five years and eleven months. We had been living in a shared basement flat on Mountpelier Parade, Monkstown. It was cold and damp, so we couldn't wait to move to our new home.

As we had been living in a furnished flat, all we had to take with us was a Kosangas cooker, a double bed, an electric fire and one chair. It took us ages to find our house, as there were no signs or proper entrance to what was still a building site. When we eventually found it, we couldn't wait to see inside. There was a good sized kitchen and sitting-room, a bathroom and three bedrooms. It was paradise towards what we came from. The walls, however, were not painted, so being a painter by trade, I stayed up all night and finished the kitchen and sitting-room. We soon noticed other neighbours moving onto our road within days and what a coincidence, the majority of them all came from the same road as where I had grown up, on Pearse Avenue, Sallynoggin.

It took a while to get everything sorted, but we soon settled in. There wasn't much around except ongoing building. There were no schools, no shopping centre, nothing for the kids to do. It was then I decided to organise something. There was a patch of green space at the end of our block, so every Saturday morning, we had a swop-shop and all the local kids used to swop their toys, books and games. Soon, we had football matches and when summer came, we organized discos as well.

By early 1978, with the support of local Dads, James Dalton, Ian McAry, Pat Hunt and Danny Mc Gown (RIP), we organised activities for early teenagers. I contacted our local priest, Fr. Mitchell, who was very helpful and gave us the use of the Parish Hall beside SS. Alphonsus & Columba's Church in Ballybrack village. We played various table games and snooker while listening to the latest pop music. We later organised outdoor activities such as Pitch 'n Putt and camping in Brittas Bay. We also took a trip down to Glencree Recreation Centre, but the kids were not impressed when they had to dig turf and go hiking over mountains.

As they loved the latest music, we got the idea to get them involved in a show with them dressing up and impersonating a singer, a group or a comedian. They loved it and after much rehearsing, we put on a three-hour variety show in the Noggin Inn, Sallynoggin, and the Sunnybank in Bray where we had, among many others, Blondie, Buddy Holly, Elvis, Status Quo, Susie Quattro, Police, Shawaddy Waddy and even Brendan Grace's character, Bottler, performed by Ann Marie Burton.

We also got the lads to join the Loughlinstown Boys FC. Then as our kids grew older, my wife and I set up Loughlinstown Celtic FC, who later joined the Leinster Senior League and won many cups.

Everyone agreed that David Mulhall from Glenavon Park was our top player.

All those kids are in their late forties/early fifties nowadays, with kids of their own, and I often meet them on the street and they still have happy memories of all those years ago.

My wife, Marion, volunteering at barbeque for Family Fun Day

Mary McHugh - Glenavon Park

In October 1977, I was relieved to get a decent house in Loughlinstown, especially for the kids. We had been living in a terrible flat in an old house on Laurel Hill Glenageary, which didn't even have proper electricity and were on the housing list for seven years. After a lot of hassle, I was really looking forward to moving into our brand new home.

The first day, there was no electricity, but we were used to that. We had to walk through building sites to get into our house, as most of the houses were unfinished. We couldn't even allow our kids to play outside because of the muck and dirt everywhere. The builders were there for months. There were no supermarkets nearby, except a small grocery shop up in Ballybrack village, where everything cost a fortune. We had to travel to Dun Laoghaire for the big shop, and to pay our rent and bills, with kids in tow every week. You could be waiting hours for the 45a or 58, which was the only bus service at the time.

Other families had moved in before us, to Achill Road and other places, but as the majority of us came from the Dun Laoghaire area, we all knew each other well. We were either related or had gone to school together.

When we got over the shock of having a house of our own, we soon found out that problems come with moving into an unfinished estate. JCBs were everywhere and the kids were always losing their shoes in the muck in the back garden. We heard that there had been a serious sewage problem a few weeks previous in some of the houses close to us because of a hidden manhole and we hoped it wouldn't happen to us. The residents had a lot of to-ing and fro-ing with the Corporation, but they tackled the problem themselves in the end.

Our first step as a community together.

Some members of Women's Resource Group

We all settled into our new homes and things began to happen in the community such as summer projects, youth groups, and a women's resource group, all of which I was involved in.

Two of my sons joined the newly formed Loughlinstown Boys football club and my husband Anthony became one of the under 12's managers.

We eventually got our first supermarket called '3 Guys' much to the delight of the whole community. I remember when it first opened. You'd see lots of people walking in with empty old prams to bring home the shopping or you might be lucky enough to own one of those tartan shopping trollies.

Thursday night was "Special night" with great offers. It was always jammers and if you happened to look at the wall beside the checkouts (now glass windows) you'd see a row of prams and tartan trollies lined up against it, waiting to be filled with bargains. The queues were long but you'd meet your friends and neighbours and have a chat. It was like a social outing.

Taken by a young Dave Keegan

The biggest queue I ever saw was when we had our first serious snow-fall about three years after we moved in. Milk, bread and coal deliveries were unable to access our estates. The supermarket was seriously affected and if we did manage to get that far, the queue went right around the corner to where Manley's take-away is now. There wasn't much stock on the shelves so we were only allowed one item. We had to water down the milk to make it stretch.

` There was a funny cartoon in the newspaper at the time, showing two men about to rob a bank and one says to the other, "To hell with the bank, look there's a bread van!"

It was tough-going back then, but we never thought that those times would be our treasured memories today. Memories that brought a community together.

Summer Project Volunteers - Friendly Women's Football Match

Teresa Devlin - Glenavon Park

My first memories of moving to Loughlinstown in the middle of October 1977, was when my mother told my four brothers and my four sisters and myself that we were moving house from Brookfield Terrace in Blackrock to Glenavon Park. I was fourteen years old and this was the worst news ever.

I hated my parents for taking me away from my friends and worst of all, it was two weeks before Halloween, one of my most favourite times of the year. I cried my eyes out and told them I wasn't moving. I even asked a friend of mine if she would ask her parents if I could live with them.

On the day we took the journey to view our new house with all of us crammed into our Volkswagen Station Wagon, the younger one on my mother's knee and the rest of us in the back (there was no rules around seat belts then), I thought my father was never going to stop driving. It seemed like hours. In fact, it was probable only about twenty minutes, but to me it was a lifetime. When we finally reached our destination, I said to my sister, Yvonne, "O MY GOD, WE'RE MOVING TO THE COUNTRY!!!!"

Not only did I think we were moving to the country, but it looked like we were moving into a prisoner-of-war camp, with all the fencing and large entrance gates, and a watchman guarding it. In fact, we were moving into a building site, as work was still ongoing, with only a dirt track leading into the estate and parts of Glenavon Park and Holly Court were still under construction. The dust and dirt was everywhere, which turned into mud when it rained. My poor mother was never done washing floors, clothes and school uniforms. I suppose we had to be grateful we had a washing- machine.

I remember walking into our new house and there was an echo in every room. The kitchen consisted of a sink unit with two presses underneath and that was it! That was our fitted kitchen. Dark brown

plastic tiles on the floor, which could never be kept clean with all the dirt and dust of the building site. Upstairs, we had chipboard floors in the bedrooms that creaked with every move. But, compared to our old house in Brookfield, this was luxury.

The highlight of the house was an indoor toilet. No more battling the elements and the boogie man when you needed the loo but the icing on the cake was a real bath. No more filling a makeshift one with pots of boiling water from the cooker. We now had running hot water. Yippee!

Going to school in Dún Laoghaire was like going on a tour. The 58 bus, no longer in service, went from the terminus outside the Health Centre, at that time on the old Wyattville Road, and took forever to get from Ballybrack village through Sallynoggin to Dún Laoghaire.

Taken by young Dave Keegan

Another memory I have was when the River in Glenavon burst its banks during a heavy rainfall. Our house is situated a couple of yards across from the riverbank with a narrow green area and a railing dividing the two. That night, the rain kept pouring down and the water was just inches away from our door. There was panic everywhere. My Dad, my older brothers, Michael and Peter, and our neighbours, Jack Keating, Noel Blake and the late Paddy Saunders, along with neighbours from the rows facing the river, were rushing around opening manholes with great difficulty to try and reduce the water level.

This went on for several hours, as the rain poured down causing the river to overflow even more. With great determination and to the relief of my mother, the men managed to stop the water entering our house and other houses along the block. It was a big community effort and a prime example of how neighbours in those days were ready to help each other in a time of crisis.

I quickly made new friends and eventually forgave my parents for moving. The only problem, like in all new estates, was that there were plenty of kids, but nothing for us to do, until one of the residents of Glenavon Park, the late Gerry Cahill, decided that something needed to be done for the high number of young children in Glenavon Park. He organised a small project in 1978 and the following year organised the first ever overall community Summer Project for hundreds of children in Loughlinstown. It was a huge success.

For us older kids, a Youth Club was set up by Tony (Muzzie) Mulhall from Arran Drive, with the help of James Dalton, Pat Hunt, Ian McAra and the late Danny McGowan. The youth club was first located in the Parish Hall of Ss. Alphonsus & Columba Church in Ballybrack, of which, ironically, I am now Parish Secretary.

We had great fun listening to music, dancing and playing games for hours. The Youth Club then moved to new premises in the Workman's Club in Ballybrack village. The leaders would keep us entertained by putting on shows and doing impersonations. Muzzie was Elvis, James as Francis Rossi (Status Quo), Tony Maher as Buddy Holly and Bernie Murray as Suzi Quatro. It was great fun with most of us taking part too.

The leaders also organised a Disco in the youth club in Shankill and they walked us all from Loughlinstown to Shankill and home again. They even put on their shows there and great craic was had by all.

The Summer Project brought a great sense of community spirit. Again, it was organised by the late Gerry Cahill, with the help of Mary McHugh, Kaye Godfrey, Mags Kenny, Anne Keegan, Sandra Fields and the late Marie Mulhall, to name but a few. The project was run from a small office beside the archway in Ennel Court (now SWAN). There was no electricity in the office, but pre-planning meetings went ahead with just a candle on the table, such was the dedication of the people involved.

The adult volunteers also brought the children on fantastic day trips by coach, train or on foot and organised games, art & craft classes and other activities to keep them entertained. I was a junior helper at the time and later on became an adult helper and enrolled my own children in the project. To many kids, the project was the highlight of their summer holidays.

I remember going on camping trips to Calary in Roundwood, led by the late Tommy Fields and his wife Sandra, who kept everyone under wraps. You daren't step out of line or you had to face the wrath of Sandra. Needless to say, there was very little trouble on these trips, but lots of fun and great memories. The Summer Project still continues to this day and hopefully will do for many years to come.

None of these projects and activities would have been made possible without the dedication and commitment of all the volunteers involved. They made the community what it is today. I would like to say a very big "THANK YOU" to all of you who have made and still make Loughlinstown a much better place for children to grow up in, and, please God, it will be the same for this generation, including my own grandchildren. Loughlinstown is a great community to live in.

My daughter Tracey - top row right, taking part in Community Games

Pat O'Connor - Arran Avenue

We were living with my Ma and Da and younger brother in an upstairs two-bedroom house on Wolfe Tone Avenue, Dun Laoghaire. We had the back bedroom with our two children aged two and a half and nine months. We were very overcrowded and my brother had to sleep in the sitting room. We were grateful to my parents for putting us up, but we longed for our own place.

After waiting five years, that day finally came in October 1977 and we were over the moon. We collected the keys on a Friday and wanted to move in there and then, but my Ma said it was very unlucky to move on a Friday. That day we went to the ESB shop to buy a cooker on the HP and to have the electricity turned on.

Mrs. Carroll, a neighbour, came in to wish me luck and handed me a small box. Inside was a piece of coal, a bottle of holy water and a teaspoon of salt wrapped in a small bag tied with string. The coal meant we would always be warm, the salt we would never go hungry and the holy water meant God would watch over us. It was a lovely thought.

Off we went the next day with our possessions and when we drove up to our house, I was delighted to see we had a front and back garden with a side entrance. The cooker had arrived before us, all wrapped up and sitting in the porch. When we entered the house for the first time, I could not believe my eyes. We had a good sized sitting-room, a huge kitchen and a large back garden. We ran upstairs to find two big bedrooms and a box room. There was so much space, we couldn't believe it. But, what I loved most of all was the bathroom, as there was no bathroom in Wolfe Tone Avenue. We were like children running from room to room with excitement.

We then brought in our few belongings, a double bed, a fridge, a yellow Formica table and chairs with a matching kitchen cabinet. Formica kitchen furniture was all the fashion at the time. The cabinet had a pull-down section in the front, which I used as a worktop, as there was nothing else in the kitchen only a sink unit.

The electricity hadn't been turned on, but we had candles, just in case. We wanted to light a fire, but we had no coal. Then, we had a brainwave. We removed the cardboard from the cooker and lit a fire from it in the kitchen. It was so cosy, we sat around it and made toast with a fork. Our neighbours, Tony and Marion Mulhall, had a Kosangas cooker and offered to boil water for us to make tea.

That night, we all slept on the floor in the box room on the double mattress, as we felt the smallest room would be warmer. The next morning, I looked out of the window and noticed our houses were built higher up than the ones on Achill Road. I could see right across to where Abberly and Brookdene are now. Back then, it was a big field and was used as a private tourist camping site. A lot of Germans used that site during the summer months.

To the right of my house, where Cromlech Fields are now, I could see acres of fields and horses. The horses belonged to travellers who were camped for years up where the Shopping and Leisure Centre is now. They would constantly roam around the different estates and it was not uncommon to see horses in your garden the odd morning.

There was a lot of work that first year. Walls to be painted, kitchen presses fitted, rubble removed from front and back gardens. The back garden was covered with a thin layer of top soil, but when my husband, Michael, began digging, he discovered rocks and boulders hidden underneath. He had an awful job.

The only bus at the time passing our estate was the 45a and if you wanted to go to Dun Laoghaire for the weekly shopping, you had to wait ages at the bus stop. And if there were two prams or buggies, as they are called nowadays, on the bus already, you were not allowed on. So, a lot of people walked up to the village with kids and babies in prams hoping to catch a 58, or they walked all the way to Sallynoggin for a 7a.

There wasn't much for kids to do in those early days before the summer projects started, as there were no facilities. But, my neighbour, Tony Mulhall, organised discos and football matches for the kids and a Saturday swop-shop all on a small piece of land at the back of my house. The kids loved to bring their toys and swop with each other.

There has been great changes over the last forty years and it's a great community with something for everyone today. I love where I live and wouldn't swop it for the world.

Summer Project Killiney Beach.

My best friend, Noeleen Saunders, RIP, sitting 2nd left, at back.

Annie Kelly - Lambay Drive

I was delighted when I got the news that we had been allocated a new house in Loughlinstown. Tommy and I, with our four sons, the youngest aged seven and the oldest, twelve, had been living in a maisonette in Fitzgerald Park in Monkstown Farm for seven years. We were happy enough there and got on well with our neighbours and we knew we would miss them, but the thought of having a brand new three-bedroom house with a decent back and front garden was very appealing. We hadn't much of a front garden in the maisonette and all we could see from our kitchen window was lines and lines of washing.

I went to have a look at the house with my neighbour Mary Hodgins, who had also been offered one. I was delighted when I found it and even though there was building going on all round us and muck everywhere, I couldn't wait to move in. It felt like home straight away.

The day finally came on the 9th of November 1977 and delighted with ourselves, we had a good look around. As we went upstairs, Tommy noticed a loose floorboard on the landing and when he went to fix it, he noticed something underneath. One of builders must have left his lunch down, unopened, and forgot about it. Luckily, the board was loose or we might have had a four-legged family moving in with us.

A couple of days later, I went shopping and when I came home and put the key in the lock, it wouldn't turn. I took it out and tried again and couldn't understand what was wrong. I got an awful fright until all of a sudden, I realized my house was two doors down! I was so embarrassed and glad there was no one around to witness it.

More families moved in over the next few days and weeks, and we soon discovered that my new neighbours were, in fact, some of my old neighbours from the maisonettes. There were lots of open fields around us and we could see horses roaming about nearly every day. We often had a morning visitor in our garden, but we got used to that.

We soon settled in and eventually got around to digging the garden. It was a hard job to get through, as there was a lot building blocks and other rubble left there by the builders. However, Tommy, myself and the kids all got stuck in with the digging and my son William actually dug up a pure silver teapot, which looks like Aladdin's Lamp, which we still have today. The following year, I gave birth to my one and only daughter, Doreen, after four boys. Then, seven years later, I had my sixth and last child, John.

We soon became part of the community and I joined the local Church Choir over thirty years ago, which is still going strong. I have made many new friends over the years and love being part of the Loughlinstown community. I'm as happy now as the day I moved in!

Area Site for the Oaks and the New Church:

Photos taken by a young Dave Keegan

1988 Church near completion taken by Sean Griffin

Official Opening by Archbishop Dermot Martin & Fr. Hastings PP

Breda O'Brien – Lambay Drive

In 1977, we were living in a maisonette in Fitzgerald Park when we were offered a new house in Ballybrack, as it was called then. We already had six children and another one on the way so we were delighted to be offered a three-bedroomed house on Lambay Drive.

We got the letter from Dun Laoghaire Corporation at the end of November and were told we could collect the keys on Friday the 17th of December. We couldn't wait to see where our house was and what it was like. So, a couple of weeks before we got the key, Frank and I went to have a look to see exactly where it was.

We eventually found it and were delighted to see it was a corner house with good sized back and front gardens. We were over the moon and couldn't stop looking in the window and around the side of the house. It was a cold, wet day and we were soaked to the skin, but we didn't care, we were so delighted.

Then, we heard someone calling to us from across the road. It was Annie Kelly, a neighbour of ours in Fitzgerald Park, who had moved in a few weeks before that. She saw how wet we were and asked us in for a cup of tea. That was the start of a great friendship, which has lasted even to this day.

On Friday, December 17th, we collected the keys and loaded up all our belongings. My husband went off with the van driver to unpack everything and I stayed at home with the kids waiting to go later. However, my husband soon arrived back with the news that the electricity would not be turned on until Monday. There was no way we could have stayed there over the weekend. The only thing he could do was take the mattresses back off the beds, load up again and with a kettle and a toaster, drive back to Fitzgerald Park. We spent that weekend in my mother's house by day and the maisonette at night. On the Monday morning, the van was loaded up again and off we went. When you think of it, we actually moved twice.

Although we had all the basics we needed such as beds, cots, wardrobes, a twin-tub washing machine, cooker, fridge, table and chairs, there was no storage space either upstairs or downstairs. In the kitchen, there was nothing except a sink unit with an underneath press. There was nowhere to store food and delph. However, we did have a lovely corner unit my mother had given me and that served us for the time-being. There were lino tiles on the floors downstairs and only sheets of floorboards in the bedrooms, but we didn't mind as we knew it would all come eventually and we were looking forward to living in our new home.

My daughter Mary was born two weeks later on the 5th of January 1978.

I am very much part of Loughlinstown nowadays and sing every Sunday in the church choir. Annie Kelly and I are both original members.

Fr. Teddy & the Choir, taken by Sean Griffin

David Blake - Inagh Court

On December 18th, 1977, we got the best Christmas present ever - the news that we were allocated a brand new house in Loughlinstown, or Ballybrack, as it was known then.

Eileen and I had two children at the time. David, aged 6 and Derek, 5, and we were living in a flat in Maple House, Mounttown. We were delighted with the news, but wondered where Inagh Court was. We soon found out.

When we arrived, the area was still under construction, with cement mixers, JCBs and all sorts of building materials practically outside our door. The muck was everywhere. Our house was situated on the outside of Inagh Court and right opposite, the builders had started on Sheelin Avenue.

The downstairs floors were covered with brown lino tiles throughout. Upstairs had chipboard flooring. The kitchen had a sink unit and nothing else. Each room had only one electric socket, so in order to use the fridge, toaster, twin-tub washing machine or anything else electrical, we had to use an extension lead with extra sockets.

Painting the walls was the first job to be done, as in those days the builders only plastered them and it was left up to the tenants to paint them. I remember my mother giving us two tins of coffee coloured paint to do the kitchen and the sitting room. We hated the colour but went ahead with it anyway, as we didn't want to hurt her feelings. Upstairs, we put up chip wood wallpaper, which was all the fashion at the time, but did we suffer later when we went to take it down!

There were no supermarkets back then, so weekly shopping was done in Dun Laoghaire. However, shortly after moving in, a shop van started to arrive every morning at around eleven o'clock, selling basic things like bread, milk sugar, which was a godsend if you were stuck.

The driver would park right outside our house and stay for about half an hour and then move on to the next estate. We also had the milk man and a variety of coal men who would let you get coal on tic if you were short. The houses had no central heating back then so you relied on the open coal fire for heat and hot water.

We settled in well and both Eileen and I got involved in the first Summer Project, as committee members and also as volunteers with the project activities for many years. Our sons joined the Loughlinstown Boys football club and I became one of the under-8's managers.

There was a great sense of community spirit in Loughlinstown back then and it's still there today.

Summer Project Talent Show with my brother Noel hiding in the background

And finally, to highlight the contrast from earlier stories, we feature the last tenant to move into Loughlinstown, into the newly built Maple Avenue, previously Laurel Avenue - Karen McDonald, August 2009

Karen McDonald - Maple Avenue

I grew up in Ashlawn Park, Ballybrack, but had been renting a house in Cabinteely for eleven years with my two children. The house was very run-down and trying to get my ninety-nine year old landlord to do repairs was impossible. I longed for a decent home of my own.

In December 2008, I was in the Credit Union on Sussex Street, Dun Laoghaire, with my Mam when I got the call from the Council offering me a house on Maple Avenue. Although it wouldn't be ready for months, I was asked to come to the Housing Department and sign an acceptance form. I was there within five minutes!

The following August, I signed for the key. It was on a Friday and I wanted to move in immediately, but my Mam said you should never move on a Friday, as it was bad luck. So, I waited until the following Monday. When I saw my house for the first time, it was quite deceptive from the outside. It looked narrow and I thought it was going to be very small, but when I turned the key and went in, I got the shock of my life. It had a long hall with four doors.

Opening the first door, I saw a large sitting-room, all bright and freshly painted with lots of sockets and a lovely black marble fireplace. Double doors led into the kitchen. Back in the hallway, I opened the second door and was delighted to discover a downstairs toilet so big you could fit a shower in it. The third door led into a storage room about 8x5ft. The last door into a fully-fitted Nolan kitchen with lots of wall and floor presses and plenty of electrical sockets. Floor presses had marble worktops with space underneath for a washing machine, fridge & cooker, which we supplied ourselves. Double doors led out to a small back garden overlooked by trees from a communal garden belonging to private apartments. All floors downstairs were covered with blue fleck lino.

Upstairs had a 17ft landing in length leading onto two generous bedrooms and a box room much bigger than the norm. Today, my son has his bed, a wardrobe, chest of drawers and a workbench in this room, with still enough space to move about. All rooms had wooden floorboards. Windows were large and doubled-glazed. Everywhere was so bright. I couldn't wait to move in and to top it all, my best friend was only three doors up from me. I felt so lucky in contrast to the conditions people had to move into forty years ago. We are blessed today to have a state-of-the art home to move into.

We soon settled in and became part of the community and shortly after I gained employment as a development worker with the Holly House community development project, working mainly with young families and early school leavers, which I love.

I couldn't ask for anything better than to be living and working in this vibrant community and I would like to wish all the people who are celebrating the past forty years here, many more years of happiness.

Holly House where I work

Loughlinstown through the Years

researched by Kaye Godfrey

In this section we look at the start of the first groups set up from 1977, continuing through the years and not forgetting, of course, the first babies born in Loughlinstown.

- 1977 Glenavon Park Tenants Assocation.
- 1977 Glenavon Park Mini Project.
- 1978 Tony Mulhall's Youth Group
- 1978 St. Louise Playgroup
- 1979 Loughlinstown Summer Project
- 1979 Dun Laoghaire Youth Service CYC
- 1979 Community Council
- 1979 Loughlinstown Youth Group
- 1980 Women's Resource Group
- 1980 VEC Adult Education
- 1980 Loughlinstown Boys Football Club
- 1981 Archbishop McQuaid Junior school
- 1982 Scouts
- 1982 St. Ann's Playgroup
- 1983 Parish and Family Resource Centre
- 1983 Leisure Centre
- 1983 Loughlinstown Senior Football Club
- 1983 Mass Choir started in the school.
- 1984 Loughlinstown Garden Association
- 1984 Girl Guides
- 1984 Harmony Badminton Club
- 1984 Archbishop McQuaid Senior School
- 1985 Ladies' Club
- 1985 St. Columbanus Badminton club
- 1986 Loughlinstown Health Centre
- 1987 Loughlinstown Community Games

- 1987 VEC Social Employment Scheme (SES)
- 1987 Loughlinstown Pidgeon Club
- 1987 Barnardo's Children's Services
- 1988 St. Columbanus Parish Church
- 1988 Joanne McDonald School of Irish Dancing
- 1988 Options Youth Programme
- 1989 The Twirlers Majorettes
- 1990 Loughlinstown Employment Group (CE)
- 1992 LEG/VEC Adult Education Programme
- 1992 Raging Hormones Drama Group
- 1995 Scoil Padraig
- 1996 New Community Rooms
- 1998 Glenavon Park outdoor Remembrance Mass
- 1998 Garda Youth Diversion Project
- 1998 Loughlinettes Majorettes
- 2001 Springboard Family Support & Activities Programme
- 2003 Estate Management
- 2004 Southside Women's Action Network (SWAN)
- 2005 Community Rooms Poo Bear Crèche
- 2005 Over 50's Activities Group
- 2006 Southside Partnership Community Development Project Holly House
- 2009 Schools Renamed St. Columbanus
- 2010 Men's Shed Project
- 2010 Loughlinstown Community Library
- 2012 Loughlinstown Swimming Pool
- 2017 Genealogical Society of Ireland (back of Leisure Centre)

First boy born in Loughlintown
Glen Moran, Glenavon Park: August 1977

First girl born in Loughlinstown
Denise Kenny, Achill Road: October 1977

REELING IN THE YEARS

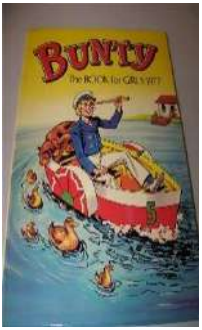
In this section we reel in the years and remember popular music, favourite sweets, kids fashion and comics from 1977. Researched by Barbara Polley.

Famous people born in 1977:	**Famous people died in 1977:**
Ronan Keating	Elvis Presley
Shakira	Bing Crosby
Orlando Bloom	Charlie Chaplin
Robbie Ryan	Mark Boland

Popular Bands:	**TV Programmes**:
Adam & the Ants	Blue Peter
Def Leppard	Dad's Army
Dire Straits	Are you Being Served
Boomtown Rats	Top of the Pops
Blondie	The Muppet Show
Status Quo	The Two Ronnies
Thin Lizzy	Porridge
Boney M	The Good Life

Number 1 Hits:	**Comics**:
When a Child is Born	Beano
If you Leave Me Now	Dandy
Living Next Door to Alice	Flash Gordon
When I Need You	Bunty
Knowing Me, Knowing You	Judy
Nobody Does It Better	Jackie
Rocking All Over the World	Spiderman
Mull of Kintyre	Tammy
Yes Sir I can Boogie	Marvel

Toys:	**Sweets**:	**Women's Magazines**:
Rubix Cube	Spangles	Ireland's Own
Lego	Treets	Woman's Own
Scalectric	Flying Saucers	Woman's Weekly
Barbie	Love Hearts	Woman's Way
Holly Hobbie	Bulls' Eyes	Hot Press
Play House	Satin Cushions	New Musical Express



EARLY SNAPSHOTS OF OUR COMMUNITY

Summer Project Badge

Brittas Bay

With Dave Lawless & Fr. Teddy

Talent Show

Don't mess with Sandra Fields!

1st Camping Trip

Getting ready for the stage!

St. Anne's Playgroup

St. Louise Playgroup with Sr. Joan

End of Summer Project Dance

Pauline Henderson - 'Glamorous Granny'

Taking a well-earned rest!

Chris Furlong compere at Fun Day

Claire Hammond Director Snow White

Sunrise at 5 a.m. Killiney Beach

First Adult Education Class, Anne Keegan's kitchen

Certificate Holders with Michael O'Riordan, Adult Education Officer, Dun Laoghaire VEC (now ETB)